

Know your rights: OH&S and Sick Leave

Sick leave is your right

If an Employee is ill, she is only required to provide a note from her doctor that affirms she is unable to work and indicates how long she will be off work. The Employee is not obliged to give information about the diagnosis or treatment.

You have the right to privacy of your medical information

Some Employers have asked Employees using sick leave to sign a release that authorizes a doctor to provide more information to the Employer.

UNA strongly advises you to not sign such a release

An Employee's personal medical information is private. Only under specific circumstances can the Employer ask for more information. A blanket release can make an Employee vulnerable. Employers can refer information to their own doctor and use it to deny a sick leave claim. If an Employee has signed a release, she can write a letter to her Employer revoking that permission.

If an Employer says more information is required, the Employee should ask what specific questions they need to be answered. The Employee can then consult with her doctor and with UNA.

Called to a meeting with OH&S about sick leave?

Employees are not obliged to report to OH&S for interviews or medical examinations. If an Employee chooses to go, she has the right to take a union representative with her to any meeting with the Employer.

Asked to fill in a form about sick leave?

Some Employers request Employees to submit forms that include information about diagnosis and treatment or request access information from their doctor. Employees should contact their UNA Local Executive or Labour Relations Officer before completing such a form, as it may seriously compromise their right to privacy.



United Nurses of Alberta